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UTILIZATION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF SOVIET MEDICINE BY RUMANIA

Meditsinskiy Rabotnik, Vol XVII, No 16  
Moscow, 23 Feb 1954

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There was no organized control of tuberculosis in Rumania until the Soviet Army liberated our country. Before that, only a few institutions were engaged in the treatment of tuberculosis. Most of these institutions were strictly therapeutic and operated individually without any over-all supervision. The small number of dispensaries and tubercular-prophylaxis stations for children was insufficient to meet the needs of the population.

The first step in the control of tuberculosis taken by the Government of the Rumanian People's Republic was a reorganization of antituberculosis institutions. These institutions were incorporated into one administration, and a general plan for the control of tuberculosis was drawn up. In this plan emphasis was placed on prophylaxis and on the organization of a medical service which would be within reach of the wide masses of workers. The experience of Soviet medicine proved in this case a valuable guide. Essential information was derived from the Soviet medical literature which was translated and disseminated through various publishing houses. A great service was rendered to us by Soviet scientists and physicians who personally participated in the organization of tuberculosis control in our country.

This program was based essentially on preventive treatment. It was decided to establish antituberculosis dispensaries as a framework of the organization for the control of the disease. Such dispensaries were first established in the regiune, then in the raion centers. At present there is an antituberculosis dispensary in every raion of the country. The number of hospital beds for the isolation of bacillary cases [patients who spread bacilli] was also increased. The treatment of tuberculosis is no longer restricted to sanatoriums and health resorts at the seashore or in the mountains. Antituberculosis hospitals have been built in numerous towns of Rumania. This resulted in a three-fold increase in the number of hospital beds available for tuberculous patients as compared with prewar times. This in turn led to an increase in the number of phthisiologists. In this respect we received the assistance of the newly-founded Institute of Phthisiatry. Besides its scientific research functions, this institute has an extensive program for personnel training. Phthisiologists are also trained at the Institute for the Advanced Training and Specialization of Physicians, which is affiliated with the Institute of Phthisiatry.

The Scientific Research Institute of Phthisiatry, following the lead of Soviet institutes, strives to adjust its work to practical requirements. Working in cooperation with the Administration for Tuberculosis Control of the Ministry of Public Health, the institute is participating in field work.

The institute has also greatly benefited from a visit of leading Rumanian physicians to the Soviet Union in December 1951 and January 1952. Rumanian delegates visited the Scientific Research Institute of Tuberculosis, Ministry of Public Health USSR, and numerous dispensaries and hospitals. In these institutions they received some valuable advice and instruction. The practical advantages of the merger of hospitals and polyclinics which has been carried out in the Soviet Union became apparent after this trip. Similar action was taken in Rumania. The procedure proved highly effective in the control of

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tuberculosis and other diseases. The close cooperation established between dispensaries and hospitals was of great practical advantage to our phthisiologists. It allowed them to study tuberculosis in all its stages of development in the light of the unity of the patient's organism with its environment.

Antituberculosis institutions, which previously devoted almost all their time to lobar tuberculosis of adults, have now enlarged the sphere of their activity, extending it first to tuberculosis in children and then to tuberculosis of the bones and joints.

For handling these cases, special departments for children, and for cases of bones and joint tuberculosis, were established at antituberculosis dispensaries.

The cooperation of pediatricians, surgeons, and therapists was enlisted to facilitate diagnosis of the disease at an early stage. Following the Soviet lead, and with the same purpose in mind, fluorography was advanced to a more important position among diagnostic procedures. (We are using fluoroscopes that are adapted to the X-ray equipment of the polyclinics.)

An excellent example was provided for us in the form of the vast experience of and excellent results obtained by the Soviet Union through its preventive measures against tuberculosis. We are now starting to use the dry vaccine prepared according to the method perfected by Soviet scientists.

Several other Soviet methods have been put into use. For instance, in bacteriological diagnosis, the flotation method of Bobrov, which is magnificent in its simplicity and accuracy, has become a routine procedure.

The removal of indurations following a novocain infiltration, the Vishnevskiy method of novocain blockade used in surgery of the thoracic cavity, caver-notomies, the removal of a lung by methods developed in the USSR, all these procedures are now used in our country on a wide scale. In our treatment of tuberculosis with antibiotics, streptomycin, and PASK [paraminosalicylic acid] we received valuable assistance in the form of recommendations by Soviet phthisiologists as well as by the Soviet chemico-pharmaceutical industry. Such drugs as streptomycin and PASK, which we receive from the Soviet Union, have been applied on an increasingly wide scale and have produced excellent results.

The dispensaries have been following the Soviet method of separating patients into four groups and using a classification proposed by Soviet physicians. Other systems have been adopted, such as the sectional [uchastkovyy] plan, the Soviet system of a medical service for workers of industrial enterprises.

The results of the measures enumerated above were apparent within a short time. The mortality rate due to tuberculosis has been decreasing every year. The phthisiologists of the Rumanian People's Republic, assisted by Soviet physicians, are waging a successful struggle for an improvement in the health of their people and the prolongation of human life.

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